THE Rockridge News

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VOL. 33 ■ NO. 4 ■ ISSUE NO. 353 ■ April 7, 2018 CIRCULATION: 5,800 RESIDENCES; 200 BUSINESSES

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AGENDA:
RCPC Town Hall Meeting
Thursday, April 19, 7 – 9 p.m.
Rockridge Branch Library Upstairs Meeting Room

April Town Hall Two-Fer: Board Elections and City Transportation Projects

The April RCPC Town Hall Meeting doubles as RCPC's annual meeting and election of Board of Directors members. This year, five candidates are running for six seats on the Board. Candidates' photos and statements are on page 3. At the meeting, candidates will recap their statements and briefly discuss their interest and goals in Board service, followed by questions from the audience.

The other topic for the Town Hall is an update by Wlad Wlassousky, Deputy Director of the Oakland Department of Transportation (OakDOT), on the Rockridge transportation projects funded by the City of Oakland's settlement of its lawsuit over the Caldecott Improvement Project. Among the projects to be discussed: an update on the Broadway lane diet; improvements to the Shafter/College/Keith and Miles/College intersections; and establishing bicycle lanes on College Avenue. See Topic Update story below.

And: See you at the polls.

Procedures, RCPC Election 2018: During the April RCPC Town Hall and annual meeting, Rockridge residents may vote for RCPC board candidates . At least 25 residents must cast a ballot at the meeting to establish a quorum. If the quorum is met, residents unable to attend the Town Hall may vote **Saturday April 21, 10 a.m. - 1 p.m.**, at the entrance to the Rockridge Branch Library.

Voter Eligibility: Persons age 18 and over who live within RCPC boundaries are eligible to vote. Verification for all voting will be by driver's license or DMV ID card showing an address within RCPC boundaries as depicted on the RCPC website: rockridge.org.

Topic Update: Caldecott Settlement Agreement Projects

by Victoria Eisen, project consultant

An $8 million settlement agreement with Caltrans following community concerns about the environmental documentation of the Caldecott Tunnel's Fourth Bore project is delivering transportation improvements that make walking and biking in North Oakland safer. Oakland staff and their consultants will provide an update on the status of these projects at RCPC's Town Hall, Thursday, April 19, beginning at 7:30 p.m. at the Rockridge Branch Library.

Completed Projects

The first projects the settlement agreement paid for were pathway improvements alongside Broadway between Golden Gate Way and Lake Temescal and new bicycle lanes on Broadway between Golden Gate Way and the Kay Overcrossing, near the eastbound SR 24 on-ramp. They were

Caldecott Projects' Progress, page 13

RCPC Land Use Committee Update: April 2018

The Land Use Committee met March 28, with a quorum present. There were two items on the agenda:

Student Intern

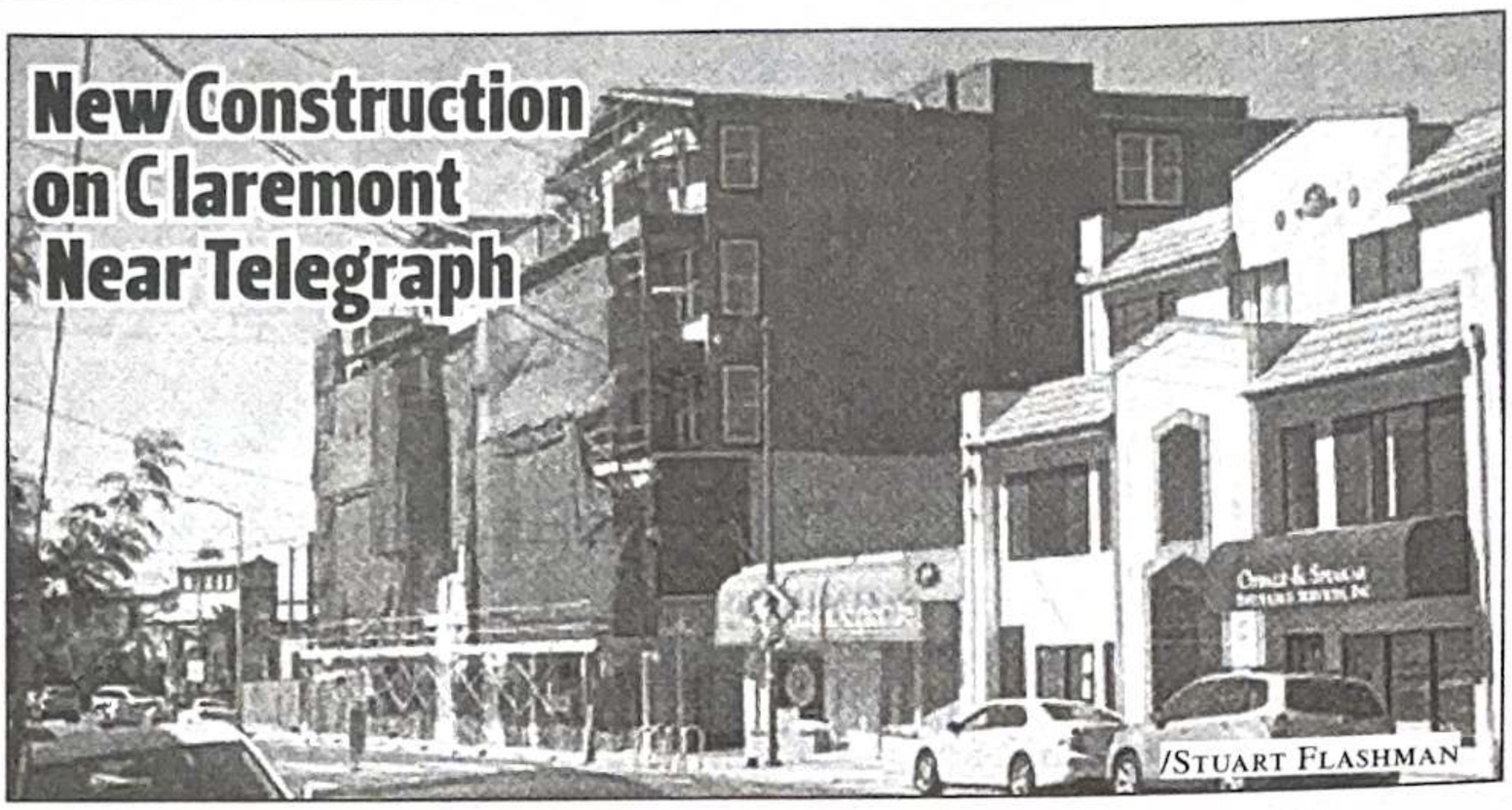
RCPC has taken on a student intern to gather data on the current residential and non-residential composition of development along College Avenue. The hope is to have the data compiled and analyzed by June to serve as a basis for evaluating the potential for different development scenarios for the area.

SB 827 (Wiener/Skinner)

The committee discussed the status of this bill, which, in its current form, would upzone most of Lower Rockridge and Temescal to between 5 and 8 stories maximum height (7 to 10 stories with maximum state density bonus). While the committee was unanimous that there was a need for more housing, and in particular housing affordable to all income groups, in the Bay Area, Oakland, and Rockridge, there was also a consensus that SB 827, in its current form, would be detrimental rather than helpful in addressing Rockridge's housing needs and protecting community interests. Committee members felt that the bill, in its current form, was overly simplistic and heavy-handed in its approach. The committee voted to engage in further on-line discussion to formulate a nuanced recommendation to the RCPC Board on what kind of position to take on the bill.

RCPC Land Use Committee

The **April Land Use Committee meeting may need to be rescheduled**. Please check the rockridge.org website on April 20 to determine if/when there will be an April meeting and, if so, the agenda.



Update on Senators Wiener and Skinner's New Housing Upzone Bill

Authors Scramble to Add Amendments to SB 827 to Address Impacts Identified by its Critics

by Stuart Flashman, Chair, RCPC

The February Rockridge News featured an article on Senators Scott Wiener's (D-San Francisco) and Nancy Skinner's (D-Oakland-Berkeley) bill, which would mandate residential upzoning near transit stations and major transit line stops statewide. Faced with significant opposition to their bill, they have added a series of amendments. (The bill's amended language as of March 1, 2018, can be found at: https://bit.ly/2pNtF2l.) The amendments attempt to placate at least some of the bill's opponents, which include many tenant and minority advocacy groups. Those opponents have said the bill would increase tenant displacement and gentrification in "transit-rich" areas like Rockridge and West Oakland. (See, for example, this recent article: https://bit.ly/2GqfWd1.)

While the bill is still at an early stage of the legislative process (pending in its first committee) — Senate Housing & Transportation), it has already become one of the most high-profile and polarizing bills of this legislative session, with front-page coverage in the New York Times and other news media. Supporters include California YIMBY (Yes In My Back Yard, which has gotten major support from the Bay Area's high-tech industry), the Silicon Valley Leadership Group, and the Bay Area

▶ SB 827, page 12

The March Town Hall : Bikeshare, Parking Permits, More

The March Town Hall audience heard a report on the Rockridge BART bikeshare station location, and new enforcement plans for Rockridge's many Residential Permit Parking areas, among other topics. Keith Schuerholz, newly moved to the Oakland Department of Transportation (OakDOT), covered a number of topics, chief among them a new enforcement push in the City's residential permit parking areas. New tools, he said, will bring more effective enforcement.

Find the full report at rockridge.org.

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Library program details/hours: Calendar, page 15

THE Rockridge News

The Rockridge News, founded March 1986 by Don Kinkead, is published monthly (except in August) and is sponsored by the Rockridge Community Planning Council (RCPC), a nonprofit public benefit organization founded to: preserve and enhance the unique character of the Rockridge neighborhood; promote the health, safety and quality of life of its residents; furnish a forum for community involvement; and provide leadership and representation of neighborhood interests.

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Jo Ellis.....Asst. Editor
Judith Doner Berne.....Eyes on Rockridge
Jo Ellis.....Advertising & Community Calendar
Susan Montauk.....Business Manager
Don Kinkead.....Graphics & Layout

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Contacting The Rockridge News

Are there community issues you'd like to see covered in **The Rockridge News**? • Do you have questions about newsletter distribution? • Want to volunteer to be a **Rockridge News** block captain? • Would you like to write a letter to the Editor?

Contact us at one of the following:

Editor: editor@rockridge.org;
www.rockridge.org;
The Rockridge News,
4123 Broadway, PMB 311, Oakland, CA 94611

Articles submitted for publication may be emailed to the editor or mailed to the addresses above. Submissions are limited to 600 words, must include the author's name, phone number, email address, and city or neighborhood of residence, and are subject to editing. Views expressed in articles accepted for publication do not necessarily reflect those of The Rockridge News, its editor, or the board of directors of the Rockridge Community Planning Council. To reprint a Rockridge News article, contact the editor.

Newsletter Advertising/Deadline

Publication date of the May issue is:

- **May 4, 2018.**
- **Submission deadline: April 19.**

Advertising rates are $26/column inch. [illegible] month pre-pay rate available. For display ads, call Jo Ellis at 653-3210 (after noon), or email joellis1@hotmail.com. RCPC reserves the right to refuse any display or classified ad that it deems inappropriate. (Classified ad contact, page 14.)

Election 2018: RCPC Board Candidates

Ashley Cruz
Boyd Avenue



I have been a Rockridge resident for over 5 years. I remember the first issue of The Rockridge News I received, and how it made me feel included in a community. I still wait for its arrival and know it will connect me to local stories, happenings, and updates.

I am a landscape architect with a background in sustainable and ecological planning, community engagement and complete streets design, and feel I will be able to help make positive change in our neighborhood.

I became interested in being a board member when M C Haug encouraged me, stating I would be an asset. BART's removal in January of the iconic and structurally intriguing Red Ironbark Eucalyptus trees along Keith Avenue helped me realize I [illegible] to share my knowledge, time and passion for outdoor spaces and to help effect the change of these public spaces, where community members connect to transit, to culture and to each other.

M C Haug
Kales Avenue



Incumbent

I have served one term on the RCPC Board. I see my role as representing the older neighbors in our community. (I am, without a doubt, the oldest member of the Board.) We moved to Kales Avenue in 1976. Forty years and three children later, I still feel lucky to live here.

I have been employed as a city planner and elementary school teacher and retired as a special education teacher with the Oakland Unified School District. I have been continually involved in Kales Avenue block activities and also serve on the California Revels Board. Several other volunteer activities claim my spare time.

I enjoy the interactive nuts-and-bolts activities of RCPC (Halloween parade and Town Hall sessions), and appreciate the work that RCPC does to keep our district livable and enjoyable. I would like to continue to support that effort with the perspective of a long-time resident and Rockridge devotee.

Sally Smyth
Hermann Street



I grew up in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, but over the past 10 years the Bay Area has become my home. I've lived in Rockridge for three years, and became a Rockridge homeowner last spring. I want to help lead the Rockridge community in planning for the future – including transportation, schools, amenities and services – a future that includes the addition of more housing units. Many of my local friends and colleagues are considering leaving because of housing costs. I want our Rockridge community to be a part of helping to make Oakland and the Bay Area accessible and inclusive for longtime residents and newcomers. Inclusive growth would benefit new residents and would make room for current residents lucky enough to call this place home. I hope my professional qualifications will be helpful. I have spent a decade working for nonprofits and in government on organizational effectiveness, food and agriculture policy, workforce development, and community development finance.

The Rockridge News Is Calling on You

Tim Jones is looking for a volunteer to replace him on his Claremont Avenue newsletter route. He can keep on delivering for a month or two, so we hope someone will step forward before he has to step down as Block Captain. Tim's is the first of two Claremont routes that we have available for new volunteers. We hope you will contact us to pick up the mantle.

Route 22B: odd numbers along Claremont between Forest and the freeway ramp to highway 24. Drops a stack of 25 at Helloakland coffee shop.
Route 16D: Both sides 5200 Claremont, including apartment at 5248, and 5400 [illegible]k Claremont Ave, west side only from [illegible]ton to Cavour.

Call 510/547-3855 or email Susan at smontauk@gmail.com to volunteer. The newsletter is published the first weekend of each month except August.

Leonora Sea
Miles Avenue



Incumbent

Since I was appointed to the RCPC Board in July 2015, I've had the opportunity to see how well a committed local board can support a community. I'm running for re-election to continue to be part of the organization that works so hard for the residents of Rockridge.

I was born in Oakland, grew up in the neighborhood, and live in the home my family has owned for 99 years. Rockridge has changed since my childhood here, and the changes were very evident when I moved back in 2004 after 26 years away. But at the same time, much was and is the same. As a board member, I've been challenged and enthused to be part of efforts, like RCPC's work with the Nautilus group on the 5110 Telegraph project, to both guide and accept the positive aspects of change, while trying to preserve what is special about the neighborhood.

Courtney Welch
Colby Street



Incumbent

I am Courtney Welch, a proud Oakland native, mother, housing and community advocate, and Rockridge resident. I have been involved with civic and community engagement since my youth, joining the Oakland Library's Youth Leadership Council as a teenager, and that early experience cultivated my desire to be an informed active citizen. I am involved with a number of local organizations that allow me to be a voice for the betterment of the community as we navigate through challenges and tough choices. As a recent appointee to the RCPC, I would like the opportunity to serve a full term to use my experiences to initiate practical *and* beneficial progress in Rockridge while maintaining the community's unique appeal and family friendly values that make it an urban oasis.

Claremont MS Gets Its Science On

The Claremont Middle School community showed its love of science, technology, math, and more on Wednesday evening, March 14, at the school's annual STEAM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Art, and Math) and Pi Day Celebration. Popular activities included calculating the math constant pi... and earning the chance to throw a whipped cream pie at Principal Jonathan Mayer, as well as student-led science stations such as pulling out DNA from strawberries, experimenting with dry ice, and an egg drop challenge.

The event also included the second annual pi contest, where students recited as many digits of pi as they could remember. Congratulations to seventh grader Max Andelman, who came in first place with 209 digits. Second place went to eighth grader Josie Goodson with 191 digits, and third place to sixth grader Noah Tadmor with 186 digits. Wow!

The Claremont PTA guesstimates that over 400 people attended the event, including current Claremont students and their families as well incoming students and other members of the community.

A huge thank you to Fournee Bakery, Village Market, and Whole Foods Berkeley for donating delicious pies for the participants. And thanks to Zymergen and Tinkering Labs for donating equipment and demonstrations for the science stations. Lastly, many thanks to all the people who made the event a success: our amazing science teaching team at Claremont; volunteers from Salesforce; and many parent volunteers. Special thanks to parent Ethan Andelman who was the lead PTA volunteer for the event.

Go Knights!



Claremont Principal Jonathan Mayer shows his love of science (by being hit by pies!) at Claremont's annual Science Night, held March 14. /Claremont School

Scenic Streets of Oakland

Scenic Streets of Oakland Needs Weeders & Diggers



You *can* help promote beauty and achieve satisfaction. Contact Lee Patterson: lee.scenicstreetsoakland@gmail.com

Photo/Lee Patterson

by Lee Patterson

This year may be drier than normal, but last year's rain, plus what we've got, is still fueling plenty of growth in the neighborhood public spaces. Scenic Streets of Oakland needs your help in keeping a few key spots looking good. If you are interested in a couple of hours of good gardening exercise each month for the benefit of your community, please contact

Get in The Weeds, page 13

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Earth Day: Time to Tidy Up the Park and Greenbelt for Summer

by Leonora Sea, DMV Neighbors, with Carol Behr, Chair, FROG Park

Don't miss it: Earth Day, Sunday April 22. March storms have helped us catch up on winter rainfall totals, but have also promoted masses of weeds, downed eucalyptus bark, and wildly growing ivy and Texas laurel, creating plenty to do to tidy up before summer. Earth Day is our annual celebration of community care for the park and greenbelt.

The DMV Neighbors Association and the FROG Committee are jointly sponsoring the 2018 Earth Day cleanup, from 9 a.m. to noon. Sign in at either of two locations:

- To work on the creek, greenbelt, and "Little Frog" (the tot park at Redondo and Clarke), sign in at the table at Cavour and Redondo.
- To work on the pond, play areas, butterfly garden, and path, sign in at the table near the big play structure at "Big Frog" (Hardy Circle).

Come rake redwood duff out of the pond, sweep the greenbelt path, trim ivy, turn over the fibar (the soft material under the play structures at Big and Little Frog), prune overgrown shrubs and trees, weed the creek bed, cut back willow roots, and pick up trash.

Once again, special thanks go to Fremont Bank, a park sponsor, that will host a table at Big Frog and provide capable volunteers. If your company or employer supports volunteering, recommend the Greenbelt and park as an Earth Day project. There's plenty to do, and you and your co-workers will be most welcome.

Remember: cleanup starts at 9 a.m. Tools and gloves will be provided, or bring your own, marked well as yours. Many tasks are kid-friendly. Parents or guardians must sign for volunteers under 18. Snacks, coffee, and drinks for volunteers will be at the tables, and water will be available. As always, remember your sunscreen. For more information, contact LeonoraSea@comcast.net or info@frogpark.org.

Community Memorial

Al Keshishian, Levant Rug Shop

The community is invited to attend a memorial service for Al Keshishian, late owner of the **Levant Rug Shop** on College Avenue, to be held Saturday, April 14, at 2 p.m. by Oakland Durant Rockridge Lodge No 188 at the Rockridge Masonic Temple, 5449 College Avenue, 2nd floor. Refreshments will follow.

Park Day School: Education Through Service

by Leonora Sea, DMV Neighbors

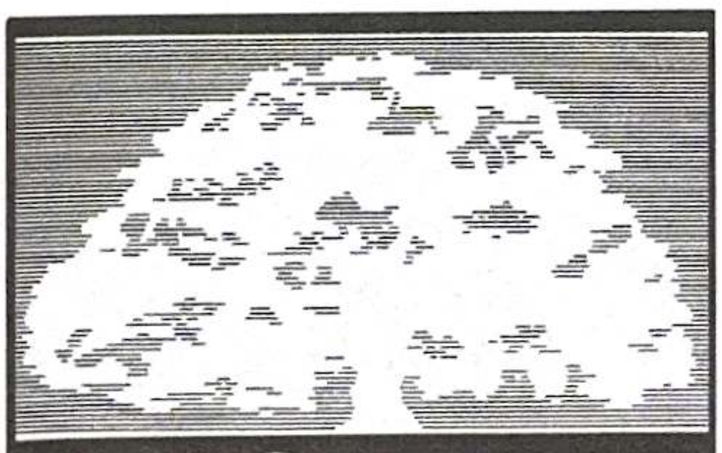
When Jeanine Harmon of Park Day School and Lynn Gitomer from the FROG Committee connected, a perfect match emerged. Jeanine is Director of Community Outreach and Service Learning at Park Day, and she was seeking a service learning project for the sixth graders. Lynn had tasks at Frog Park and the Greenbelt appropriate for eleven- to twelve-year-olds. Out of this connection came Park Day School's stewardship of Frog Park, within walking distance of the school and already familiar to many of the sixth graders.

Service learning is a well-established method of education, combining classroom learning and hands-on community service. Jeanine's goal is to introduce Park Day School students to Rockridge activists and organizers—ordinary people doing extraordinary things to help the neighborhood. Before each volunteer day, a different guest speaker discusses their involvement with the park, past and present. Two of the original founders, Rockridge residents Theresa Nelson and Jennifer Cooper, have shared their history of the start of FROG and the building of the play structure.

The "service" part of service learning centers on work days. The student volunteers have picked up trash (noticing less trash in the winter months when park usage is lower); collected fallen eucalyptus bark; observing how it peels off the trees in long strips; and raked leaves (noticing the winter drop-off in fallen leaves). In February, they began preparations for the relocated butterfly garden, to be planted in the area cleared by the tree that fell last year. FROG plans for April, in addition to the community-wide Earth Day event, include further work by the Park Day volunteers on the butterfly garden planting area: soil preparation, deciding which pollinator-attracting natives to plant, and perhaps by making a garden plan. Special thanks are due Jackie Salas, horticulture supervisor at Children's Fairyland, who provided a trove of information on choosing, planting, and maintaining the appropriate species for the particular environment of the park.

Next time you walk along the path between Clifton and Hardy Circle, notice how well-maintained it is. Keep an eye on the area around the bench, where next year you may see monarch butterflies, swallowtails, painted ladies, and fat, busy native bees.

Thank you, Park Day School sixth graders. You Rule!



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Eyes on Rockridge

Neighbors inspire music lover to create house concert series

by Judith Doner Berne

Would Anne Emerick be hosting house concerts if it were not for the fact that she lives on a block in Rockridge that boasts several talented musicians?

She thinks not.

Emerick, whose Wisteria Ways house concerts are usually listed in The Rockridge News Community Calendar, has been opening her home for indoor and outdoor concerts since 2006.

"Taking a riff off the phrase that 'It takes a village to raise a child' (she has two adult children so she knows), so too, it takes a community to start a house concert series," she both told me and writes on her Wisteria Ways website.

She credits musician neighbors David Morris, Brendan Doyle and Maxine Gerber with giving her the impetus to start the concert series as well as logistical help from Daniel Steinberg, now of Santa Cruz, who leads a World Harmony Chorus and has his own house concert series.

There she was, she said, taking time off from being a scientist to raise two young children, when down-the-block musician couple Doyle and Gerber held some house concerts. "I felt I had died and gone to heaven to be able to attend a concert, any concert, let alone on my very own block," she said. "I didn't realize at the time that it had planted a seed."

But the seed had to be watered and nourished, and that took time — five years in fact — from idea to conception. "Pivotal was my musician neighbor David Morris," Emerick said, "who, in the spirit of community service, offered to have his baroque classical group play here on the condition that it would be a fundraiser."

When that was successful, Wisteria Ways (named for a wisteria plant Emerick planted in her backyard in 1976) fully bloomed. "I do roots-based music: traditional, folk, non-amplified, acoustic."

Billing it as a private, Northern California House Concert series, Emerick has room to host indoor and outdoor concerts in her 1915 Craftsman home "with the largest backyard (75 by 150 feet) on the block."

"I've had 110 people here," she tells me, as we stand on her back deck, where she has installed overhead netting to shield musicians from the sun. She encourages attendees to bring picnics, blankets and/or lawn chairs and to wear a hat and sunscreen.

For indoor concerts, the house holds 50 or more, and she encourages stair-sitting where the acoustics are particularly good, aided by ample wood built-ins and hardwood floors that "nicely amplify voices and instruments."

"This is not a business," she emphasizes. Suggested donations of $15-20 per person go directly to the musicians. "It costs me money. I provide drinks and treats. It's a very expensive hobby. It's all to foster the musical arts."

Although she believes she is now the only home concert host in Rockridge, "I've nurtured other house concert-givers in the area. You can never have too much music."

Emerick, who retired a year ago as a microbiologist working on the joining together of DNA molecules, received her BA in biology from Oberlin College (attracted by its music and science programs) and a Ph.D. in bacteriology from Cal Berkeley.

"Music has been an active part of my life since the second grade when I became obsessed with playing a toy clarinet. I managed to wear out the keys so that it could only play one tune: 'Good Night Ladies'," Emerick said. She played flute throughout college and has sung in a local chorus, but at this point, "I mostly just have an appreciation for music."

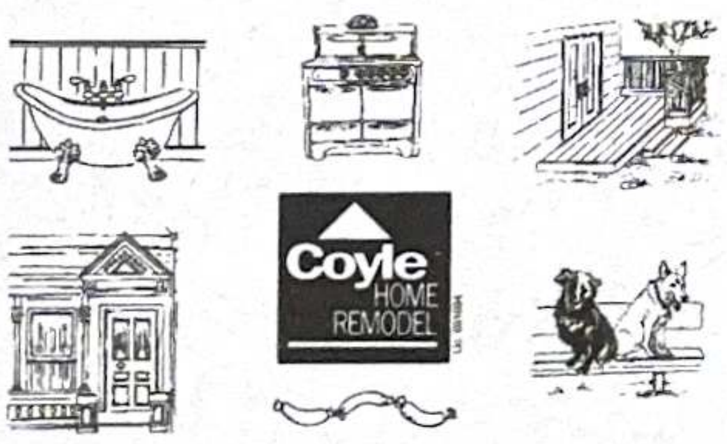
"By hosting house concerts," neighbor Gerber said, "Anne is providing an opportunity for the musicians and the audience to experience a musical performance in a small, intimate setting. Often there is no sound system, so everyone gets to enjoy the acoustic sounds of the instruments and voices.

"Many extraordinarily talented musicians aren't well-known enough to be booked into a large venue, and that can deprive the community of hearing a lot of fantastic music," said Gerber, who along with husband Doyle, plays guitar and banjo and has lived in Rockridge for 40 years. "So house concerts are a real gift to the community."

From past experience, Gerber knows how much work it takes to put on house concerts. "I'm so grateful that she's willing to take on the effort to bring wonderful music to our community."

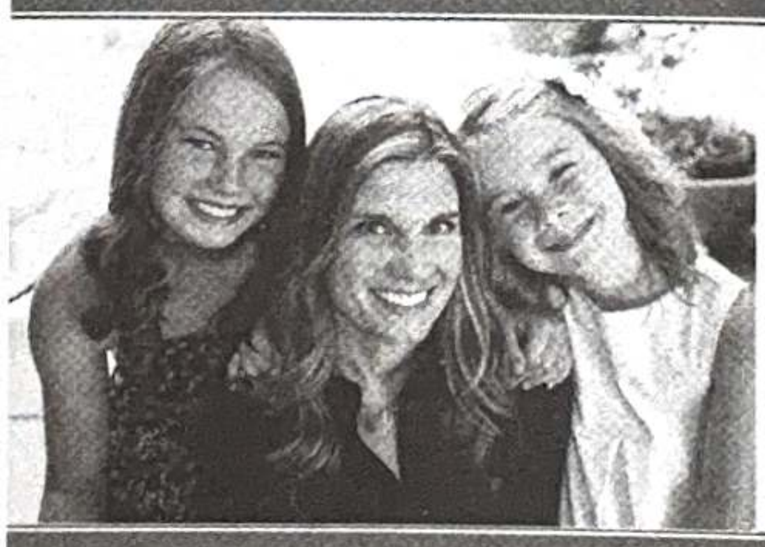
"I think Anne has hosted nearly a hundred musical events," reports next-door neighbor

Wisteria Ways, page 7



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Wisteria Ways

from page 6

Morris, a professional cellist and early music specialist. "House concert series like Anne's are an incredible gift to performers and audiences alike," he wrote in an email. "Having even one series like this in our midst is a real plus for the neighborhood.

"Speaking as a performer," he detailed, "I can tell you that being asked to play on an established series is a special treat. And most listeners will tell you that there is a special delight in hearing and seeing performers up close... all those aspects of performance which make it so human and interesting and nuanced, right there in front of you.

"We musicians spend so much time working on our programs, practicing, teaching (or doing whatever we do to keep food on the table and a roof over our heads) that having someone else ASK us to play, take care of publicity and provide us with a venue, audience and some kind of compensation is beyond lovely.

Like parenting," Morris said, "it can be skilled, full-time job which will never be compensated to the degree that it should be. "Anne runs her series as a labor of love and because it delights her."

"Playing at Wisteria Ways feels like stepping back in time to when chamber music — music in people's houses and small halls — was the main way people experienced music," said Diana Rowan, a harpist who has performed at Emerick's home numerous times with various groups.

"All my colleagues love playing at Anne's because she's a pleasure to work with and a wonderful person," Rowan said. "She's hugely enthusiastic, easygoing and generous. Everything she brings in at the door she gives to the musicians, and we appreciate her support so much. She publicizes beautifully and makes all her guests feel welcome.

"The Bay Area music scene would not be the same without Anne," Rowan said. "She's a community and arts web-weaver who has made a real impact on our area's artistic legacy."

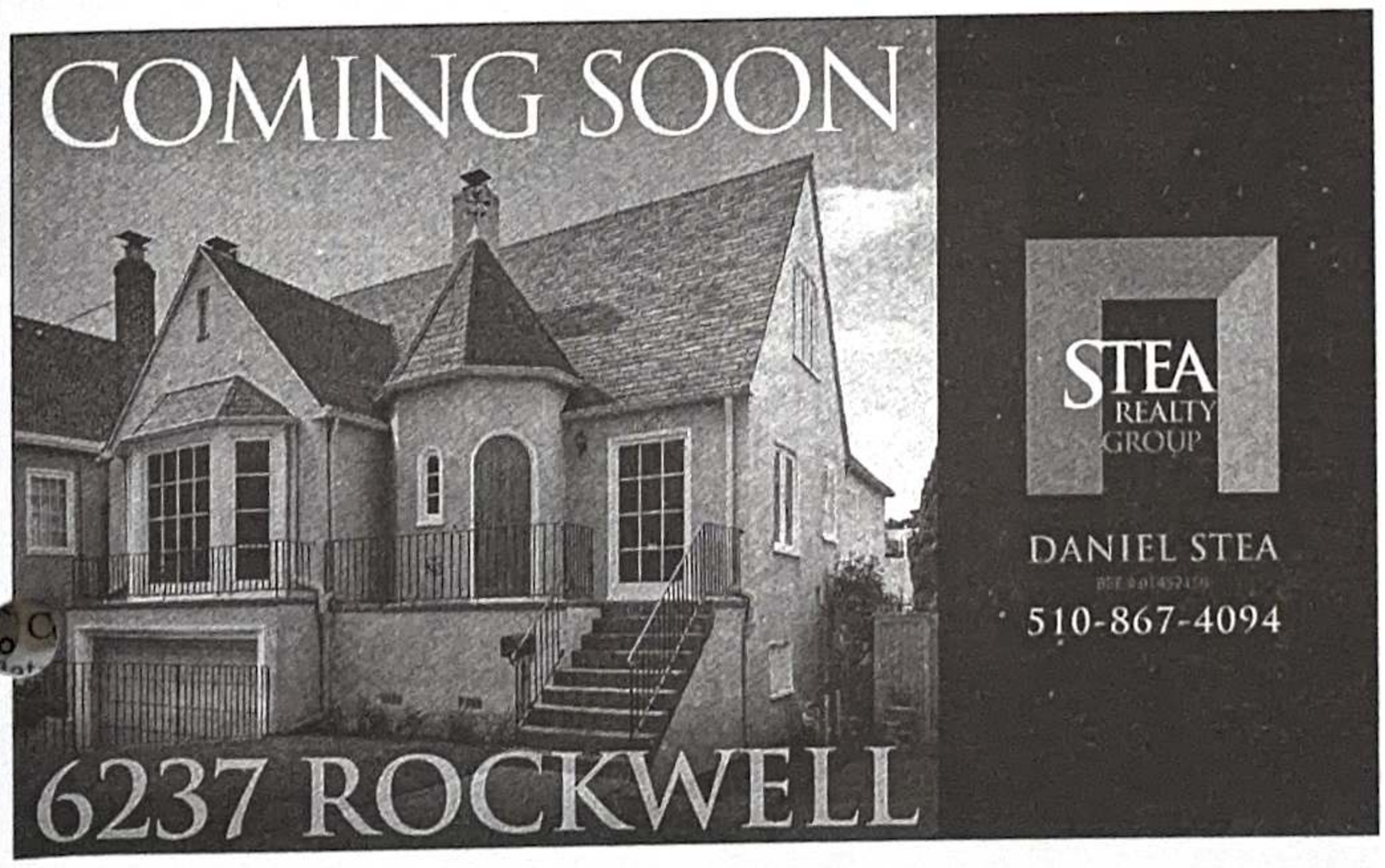
Upcoming concert dates:
June 16 – Janam;
Sept. 1 – The Jellyman's Daughter;
Nov. 3 – NUVO Chamber Quartet.

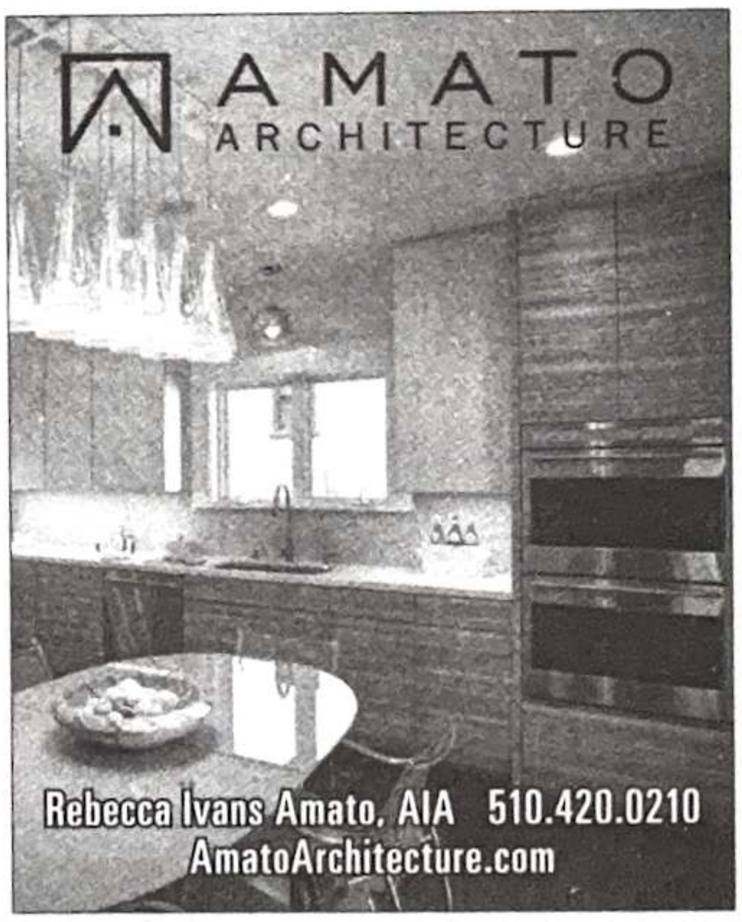
For more information, contact info@wisteriaways.org or visit wisteriaways.

If you have comments or suggestions for future columns, email judyberne@att.net.



Anne Emerick has had as many as 110 people attending concerts in her Rockridge backyard. /Judith Berne





New SaferRockridge Patrols Provide 24/7 Response

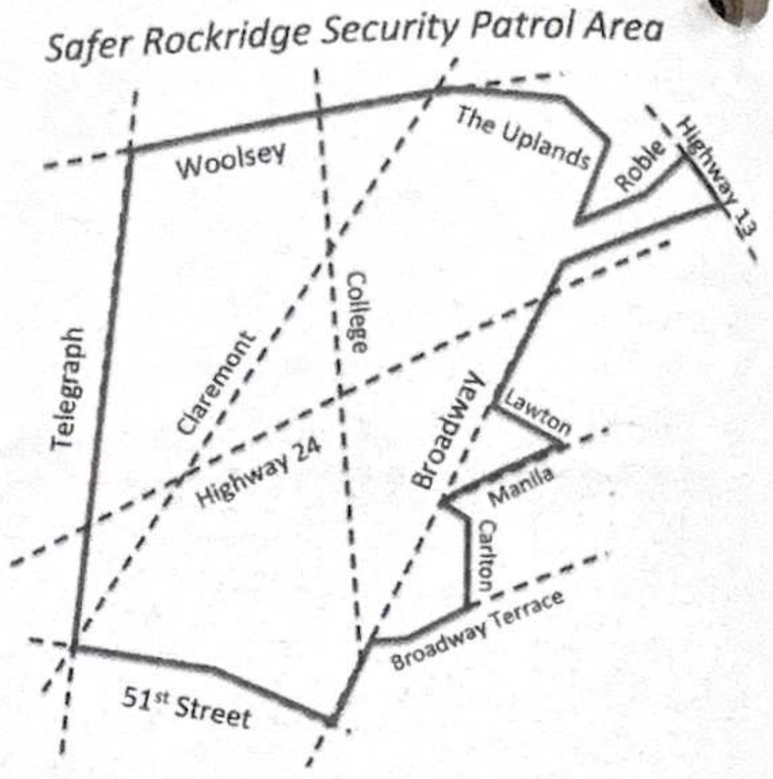
by Paul Liu, Rockridge Patrols

Safer Rockridge is excited to announce that we have a new patrol provider, Intervention Group, Inc. (IGI), a locally-owned and operated business serving many other Oakland neighborhoods as well as numerous high-end clients including players on the Golden State Warriors and rock stars.

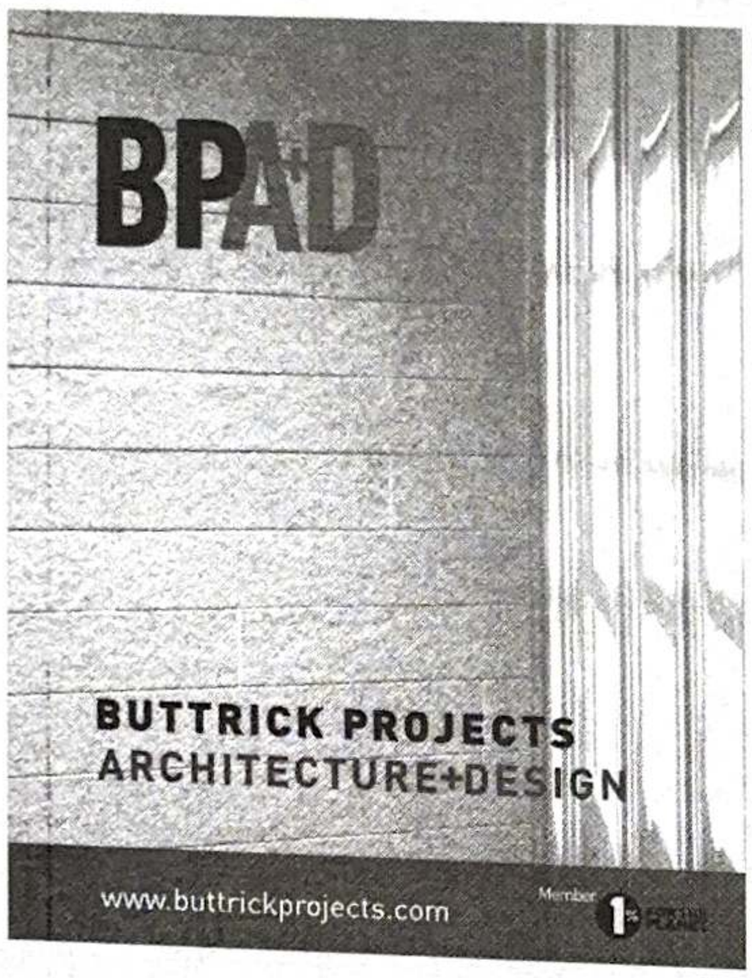
IGI uses highly visible, Intervention Group-detailed black patrol vehicles staffed by unarmed officers with experience in neighborhood patrolling. The focus of the patrols continues to be to create a visible security presence that deters crime in the neighborhood. Previous analysis found that the introduction of patrols decreased robberies and burglaries by 30 percent. In addition, IGI offers a number of significant service enhancements.

First, IGI patrol response can be reached 24/7 via their dispatch service at 877/272-8765. Response is available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, regardless of scheduled patrol hours. As before, this service is available to anyone (contributor or not) within the patrol area (see map), but it is available thanks to the generous support of community members and several commercial sponsors. We can always use your new and continued support. See SaferRockridge.org. 24/7 IGI patrol response is available for urgent matters or emergencies, but, in emergencies, call the Oakland Police Department first.

Second, we continue to have scheduled patrol hours, which for March were Monday-Friday, 3 to 10 p.m. Please subscribe to our newsletter at SaferRockridge.org/subscribe to get the latest scheduled patrol hours.



Safer Rockridge, page 14



Experience * Knowledge * Performance

Oakland and Real Estate nuggets
* Oakland has a new $6k-$12k owner move in tenant relocation fee ordinance
* Second installment of property taxes are due before the 10th!
* Free Arts Now education event at Oakland Museum 4/7
* Free open house for event rentals at Chabot Science Center 4/9

For sale this month:
>5589 Lawton Ave - gorgeous +/- 3,000 sqft of living space, home plus accessory building, 3 blocks to BART
>2912 Benvenue brown shingle home plus two legal detached income units 1 block from College Ave.



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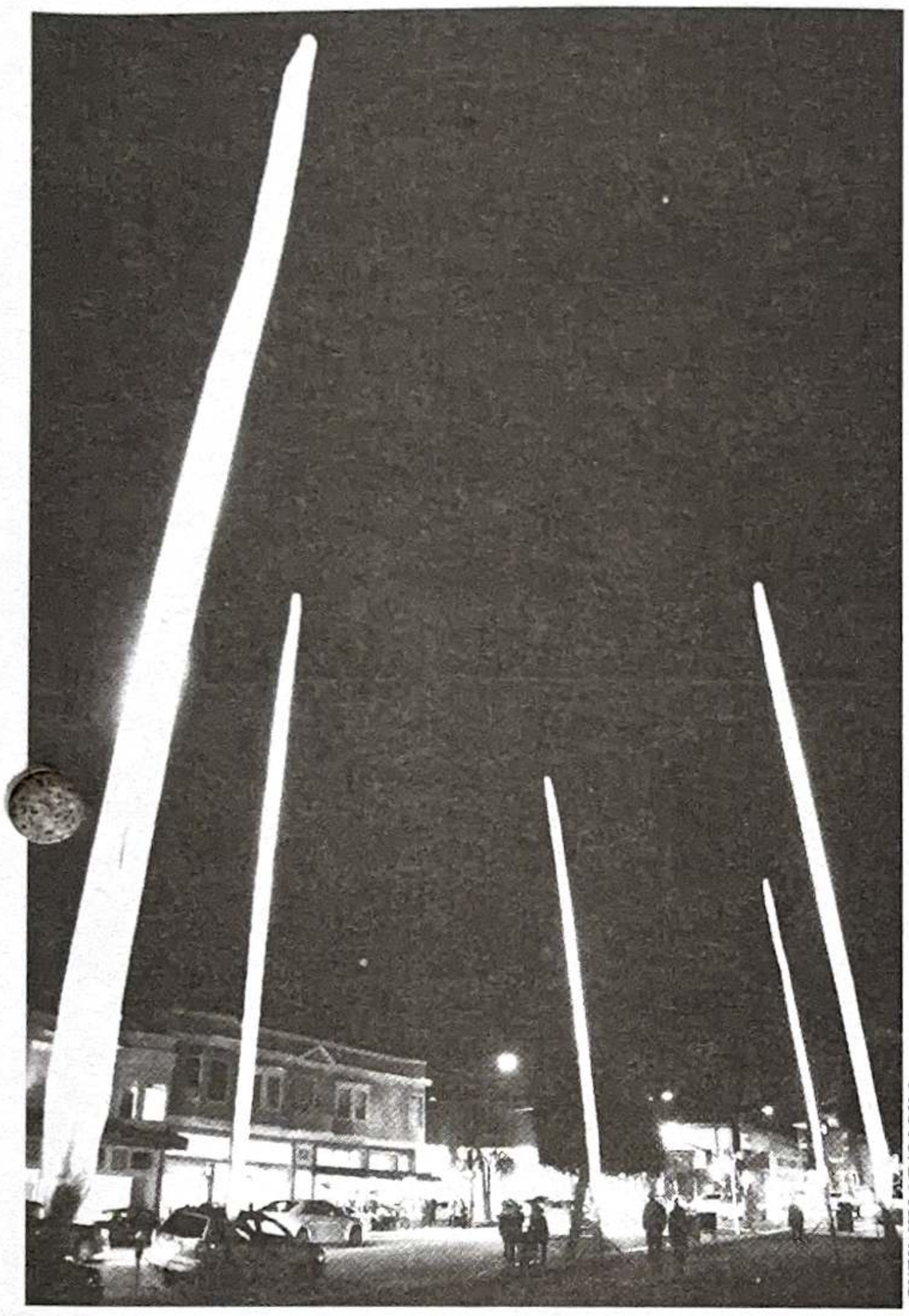
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Rockridge Artist Brings Life and Light to Enigmatic Corner

Local Artist Mauricio Bustos shares the opinion of many Rockridge residents that the vacant lot at the intersection of Claremont and College avenues is a shameful waste of a community asset. The difference is he could do something about it. The result was a compelling display of moving lights and changing colors one evening in March. At right is Busto's list of questions and answers about the project.



PHOTO/D. KINKEAD

Questions and Answers: Mauricio Bustos

What was the purpose of this project?

That space has been empty for a bunch of years and there hasn't been anything done with it. A lot of people in the community were talking about trying to use it for something more interesting like a park or just a public space where people could display things. We tried to get in touch with the owners and they said that they weren't interested in doing anything like that and so we put the piece up there.

How do you feel about the project?

It got a lot of people to come out and actually come into the space and experience it. There was a lot of positive reaction and trying to figure out ways for us to use the space more effectively.

Did it all go as planned?

Yes, the only problem was getting the pizza on time.

What inspired you to make this installation?

I don't know; it's one of those things that just popped into my head. I had the idea one day about trying to represent things using things like wind and color to represent an interesting natural phenomenon.

Do you plan on doing any projects like this in the future?

There are other things that I'm working on right now professionally but something like this might come up in my head again.

What did you learn from this project?

That you can't do things like this alone. You need a lot of people to help you with it, especially when you look up at something so big. The other thing is your instinct about how a project is going to be reacted to by the community. Usually it's bright and there's a lot of interest in getting things to be more public and some beautiful things in, and it was really represented by how much of the community came out to talk to us.

Would you change anything if you were to redo this?

I think it would have been interesting to have another set of 5 poles out there to just fill up the space a little bit more. I think that's the main thing.

What do you think people thought about this project?

I think it made them think differently about the space. There was a lot of confusion about what was happening at the beginning, which I actually liked to see because they saw something come together and weren't really sure about what was happening, but in the end they understood.

Did you enjoy this project?

With anything big like this there are trials and tribulations, and it's not a free experience. There is a lot of money involved and a lot of time and a lot of effort, but in the end it always gets to me and I'm very proud of this.



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Competition Drives Price in March

Closing date	BR	BA	Address	Original price	List price	DOM	Selling price
3/02/2018	3	2.5	6232 Rockwell St	$1,495,000	$1,495,000	13	$2,250,000
3/07/2018	3	2	5715 Oak Grove Ave	$1,295,000	$1,295,000	14	$1,670,000
3/13/2018	3	3.5	5112 Miles Avenue	$1,398,000	$1,398,000	15	$1,740,000
3/16/2018	2	1.5	5125 Manila Ave	$899,000	$899,000	14	$1,390,000
3/20/2018	3	1	384 61St St	$1,150,000	$1,150,000	53	$1,600,000
3/27/2018	5	3.5	6209 Colby St	$1,985,000	$1,985,000	13	$2,584,335
3/27/2018	3	2	489 McAuley St	$1,049,000	$1,049,000	13	$1,415,000

Homes sold in March closed 36% over the asking price on average.

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Letters to the Editor

The Rockridge News welcomes posted letters and emails to the editor. Your name, address, phone number, email address and city/neighborhood must be included in either for verification. Only your name will appear with your letter. ***Unsigned or anonymous letters will not be published.*** Letters may be edited for clarity and brevity at the editor's discretion. Views expressed in any letter are the writer's own, and may not necessarily be shared by the editor or by RCPC.

BART Already too Crowded to Handle Influx of New Residents

Editor:

I appreciate the good intentions of Senators Wiener and Skinner, and the letter writers who support their efforts to eliminate zoning restrictions in transit areas, but it appears that neither the Senators nor the letter writers who support the bill are regular commuters on BART. As any BART passenger would tell them, BART is full. There are no seats on any trains from Rockridge from the earliest train at 4:50 a.m. through at least 9:50 a.m., and there often is no room at all on the trains leaving Embarcadero for Rockridge during commute hours. If the hundreds, or thousands, of new residents were to move in and start using public transportation, the system would collapse. We need to expand public transportation first, and think about adding housing in transit areas after that.

— David Goodwin

Editor Neglected Helpful Answers for New Resident

Editor:

I enjoyed neighborhood newcomer Ben Friedman's piece about the vacant lot at College and Claremont. (The Rockridge News, March 2018 issue.) He is an engaging writer with a lovely literary style. However, I was surprised you did not append an Editor's Note answering the questions he posed about that parcel of land. As I'm sure many, if not most, of your readers know, for decades that was the site of a Shell station. Gas stations are disappearing from areas such as ours as property owners turn to more lucrative uses. In the case of that station, the owner demolished it and proposed a three-story building for the site, another of those ubiquitous "two floors of apartments above ground level retail" developments. But with the retail market cratering, and for other unexplained reasons, the project has not gone forward. Many of us would love to see a park or playground there, as Friedman proposes, but there may well be expensive underground toxic remediation required, since old gas stations often leave environmental trouble behind. I believe the owner is still the Montrose Investment Company. Friedman could easily confirm this with a simple visit to the county assessor's office, or perhaps even by calling them. The online tax records show it has an assessed value of about $253,000. I'm disappointed that you allowed Friedman to speculate in print about the "mystery" parcel, even ruminating about whether it's owned by the city, without clarifying it's well-documented history. Oh, and welcome to the neighborhood, Ben!

— Doug Sovern

What is the Status of the Vacant Lot at Claremont and College?

Editor:

I am sure you are getting lots of emails about this, so I hope we aren't piling on too much. But, lots folks we talk to are wondering about plans for the lot at Claremont and College avenues.

It is wonderful to have it open, and everyone we talk to seems to agree it should be turned into a little park, especially since we may be seeing more development, per the current plans by legislators.

Could you please update us on the status of the lot and the extent to which we can affect the decisions about its future?

If the issue is the fact that someone owns it and wants to develop it, perhaps we can create a bond or parcel tax to buy and develop it?

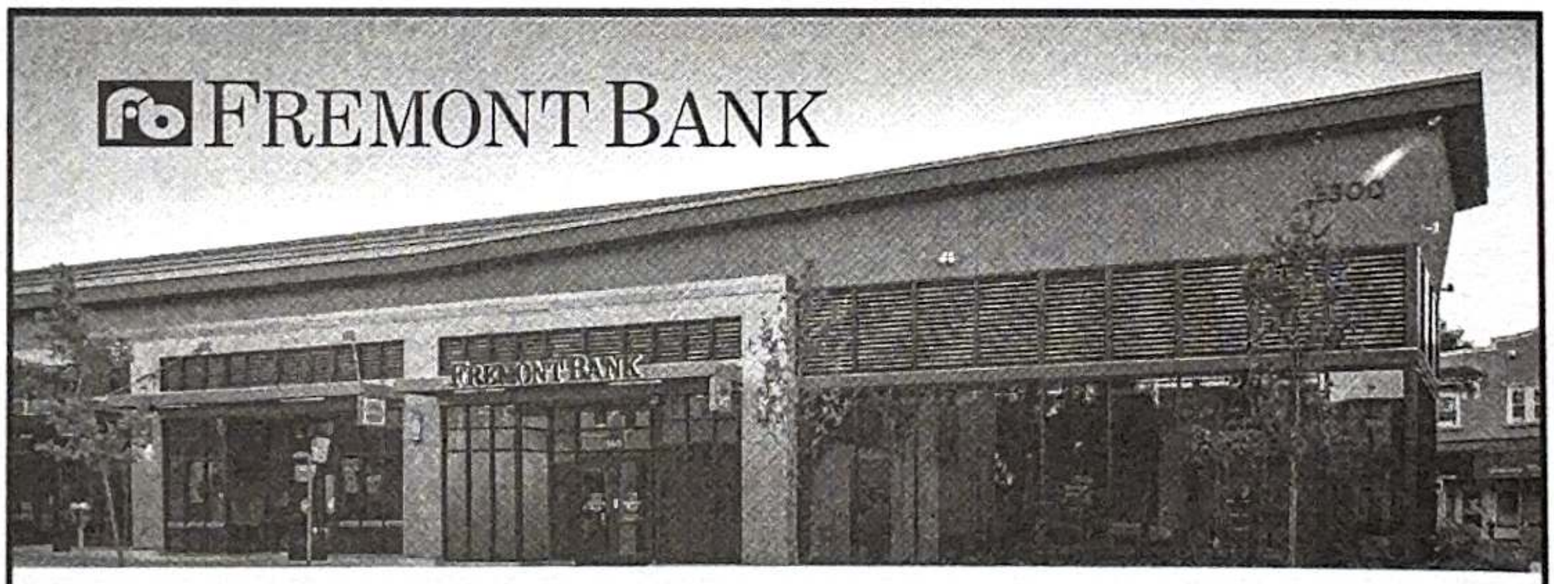
— Anthony Sperber

RCPC Chair Stuart Flashman Responds to the Idea of Making the College/Claremont Parcel Into a Park

The property in question, located at the "point" of the College and Claremont avenues intersection, is private property. It can only become a public park in one of three ways: 1) The owner decides to donate it to a public agency (e.g., the City); 2) The City purchases the property, either through negotiation or eminent domain proceedings, for a negotiated or court-determined price based on the property's fair market value; 3) Citizens in the area pool their resources to purchase the property and dedicate it as a public park.

There are about 5,000 residences in

To Make a Park, page 11



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To Make a Park

from page 10

Rockridge. If each residence put up $1,000, that would total $5 million. That might be enough to purchase the property, but getting all 5,000 residences to put up $1,000 each is a tall order. The letter writer is welcome to investigate whether such a plan might be feasible.

The property's status, as RCPC understands it, is that the property's owners (there are actually two parcels) have come to agreement about a joint venture project, although apparently no formal application has been filed with the City. [Note that contamination from the former gas tanks on the property was remediated after the gas station was demolished.]

— Stuart Flashman, Chair, RCPC Land Use Committee

Local Masons Host Ninth Annual Pancake Breakfast Fundraiser

Pancakes and Sausages Benefit Claremont Middle School

On a Saturday morning late in February, members of the Oakland Durant Rockridge Masonic Lodge #188 generously hosted their ninth community pancake breakfast to support Claremont Middle School. This annual event, co-sponsored by the Claremont Dads Club, brings community members together to share a hot meal and raise funds for the Claremont PTA.

As in years past, the Masons demonstrated their commitment to the Rockridge community by serving up a delicious breakfast spread at their historic Masonic Hall on College Avenue. The event also featured finger-poppin' live music by the Claremont Jazz Band, directed by Claremont music teacher Ari Brown, along with numerous raffle prizes awarded during the breakfast. The grand prize was a slick new Momentum bicycle from Hank & Frank's bike shop on College Avenue.

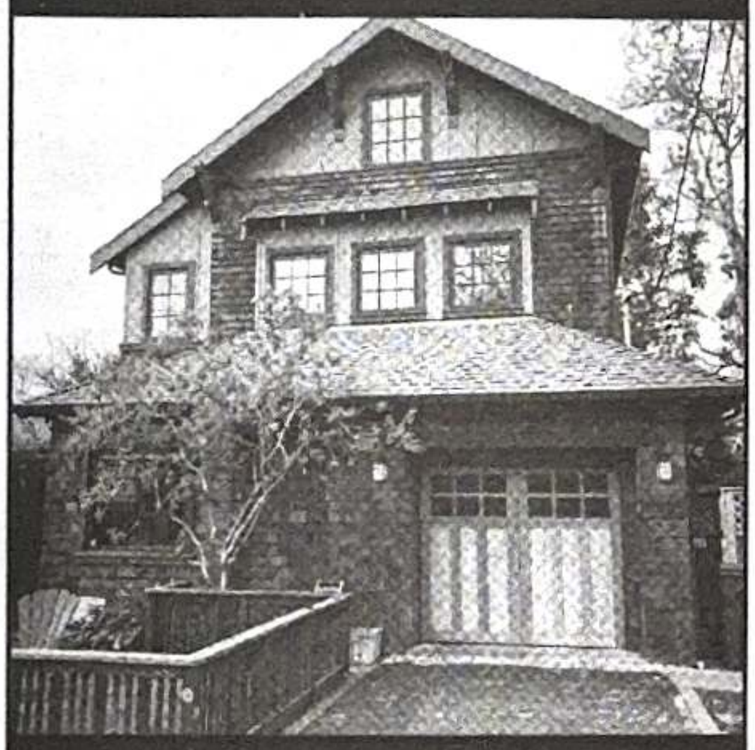


The Claremont Middle School Jazz Band performed live sets during the pancake breakfast at the Rockridge Masonic Hall. /Morris Dye

Special thanks must go to Ed Stevenson and all the Rockridge Masonic Lodge members who have dedicated so much of their own time and resources to support the students at our neighborhood public middle school. This year the event raised more than $4,000 for the PTA, which funds a broad range of educational and extra-curricular initiatives at the school.

Were you unable to attend? Never mind: The 10th Annual Claremont Middle School Pancake Breakfast is tentatively scheduled for Saturday, February 23, 2019.

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SB 827

from page 2

Council. The opposition is headed up by the League of California Cities and includes local neighborhood groups, especially in the Los Angeles area.

Wiener and Skinner have responded by adding amendments to clarify some of the bill's provisions and to add some protection for current tenants in rent-controlled units. Also added are provisions intended to help tenants displaced by projects under the bill, including potentially providing them with "comparable units" in the new projects. However, under California's Costa-Hawkins Rental Housing Act, those units could not be subject to rent control.

It remains to be seen whether the proposed changes will satisfy the bill's opponents, and if not, what additional ➡ changes might be added. One risk is that a bill can get so loaded down with amendments that it becomes too complicated and gets shelved by a committee along the way.

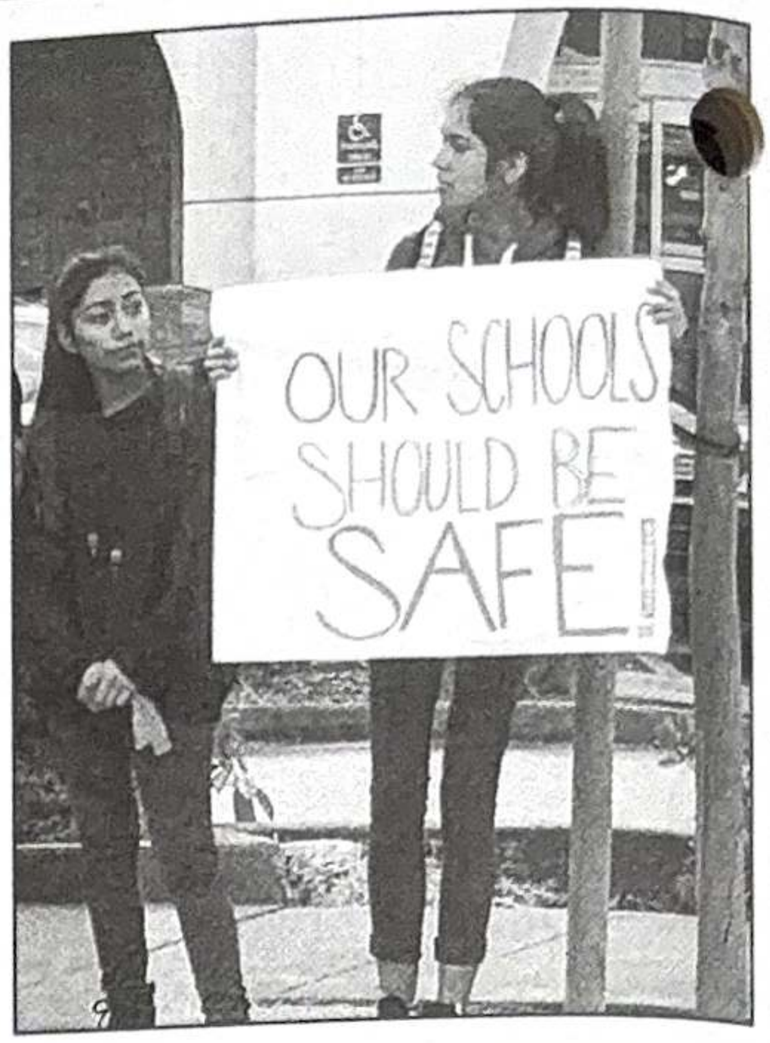
Certainly this bill remains one for residents of Rockridge and other transit-rich neighborhoods and communities to watch and comment on. Those are the localities where the bill's impacts — both positive and negative — will be focused.

Follow the bill on the Legislature's website: https://leginfo.legislature.ca.gov/.

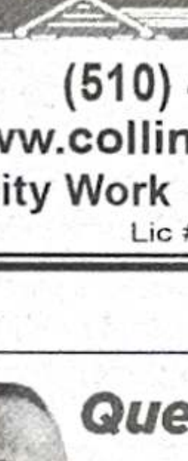
Claremont MS Students Walk for Gun Safety

Along with students across the nation, Claremont Middle Schoolers walked out of class on Wednesday, March 14 and observed 17 minutes of silence in honor of those killed at Stoneman Douglas High School in Florida. CMS administration and teachers endorsed the walkout and spent time during classes to talk about issues and concerns students might have. Students held handmade signs and the crowd elicited many supportive honks along College Avenue.

PHOTO/JHUNEHL FORTALEZA, 6TH GRADE HUMANITIES TEACHER



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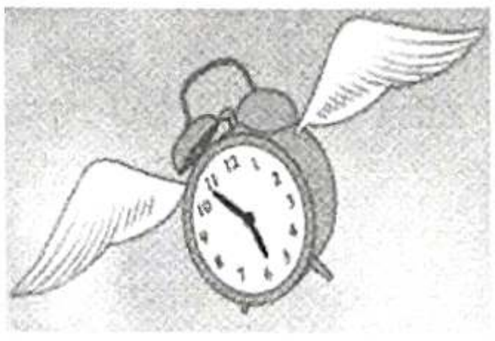
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Caldecott Projects' Progress

from page 1

completed in 2016.

Next were walking improvements and a new two-way "cycle-track," a separate bikeway on the south-east side of Broadway between Keith and Brookside Avenues. The settlement agreement also funded pedestrian-scale lighting on Telegraph Avenue and 52nd Street, which was installed in 2013.

Projects Underway

The City is in the final stages of completing a major resurfacing and ped/bike safety project on Broadway between Keith Avenue and Broadway Terrace. The project reconfigures Broadway from two lanes per direction to one with new bicycle lanes, and multiple pedestrian improvements. These include Oakland's first pedestrian-activated traffic signal (also known as a HAWK or hybrid signal) at Lawton; a flashing beacon at Taft; and corner bulb-outs and median refuge islands at multiple locations throughout the corridor — project features paid for with Caldecott funds.

The final design of a reconfigured intersection of Tunnel Road/Hiller Drive/SR 13 southbound on-ramp is complete and awaiting an encroachment permit from Caltrans. This project will move the bike lane from the left of the freeway on-ramp approach to the right, so bicyclists will cross traffic at the signalized intersection, rather than having to cross the on-ramp approach as they do now. It will also extend the sidewalk from the Berkeley city border up to this intersection and will modify the traffic signal to accommodate people walking and biking. Adjacent to this project, designs are also complete for a new sidewalk and bicycle lanes from the Tunnel/Hiller/13 intersection to the end of Caldecott Lane at Parkwoods Condominiums. This project is also awaiting a Caltrans encroachment permit.

The last effort being pursued at this time is the Rockridge Safe Routes to Transit project, jointly funded with regional funds and money from the Caldecott Tunnel Settlement Agreement. This project will resurface the roadway; add bicycle lanes to uphill segments of College Avenue between Broadway and Alcatraz; and corner bulb-outs to shorten pedestrian crossing distances. The design for this project is complete; it does not require any encroachment permits and is expected to go out to bid in the next two months.

Remaining Projects on Caldecott $8 Million List

Work on other projects that could be funded through the Caldecott Settlement Agreement are awaiting construction bids for the projects catalogued above. At that point, the City will know how much of the $8 million remains. This information is expected by December 2018.

The April 19 presentation will be posted at www.fourthbore.org. For more information, contact the City's outreach consultant, Victoria Eisen, at victoria@eisenletunic.com or 510/525-0220.

Get in The Weeds

from page 4

Lee Patterson at lee.scenicstreetsoakland@gmail.com. A team usually works on the Claremont Avenue/Highway 24 on- and off-ramps, collecting trash, weeding, pruning and planting, on Wednesday mornings. Other workers focus on our two dozen street trees around Claremont and Vicente Way on their own schedules. They work alone or in teams, as they wish.

Note: After years of being provided a good home by RCPC, we are now sponsored by the Oakland Parks and Recreation Foundation. We are excited about the possibilities that affords for sharpening our efforts at recruiting help and building relationships. If getting dirty outside isn't your cup of tea, we could also use help on the digital side of our efforts, including outreach and website maintenance. If you are interested, we look forward to meeting you.

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Taste of Temescal Is Back!

The tastiest fundraiser for local public schools is coming again on Tuesday, April 24, 6-8:30 p.m. Buy a $40 ticket for each member of your family here and set them loose to roam Temescal, eating gourmet goodies from restaurants including: Asmara, Aunt Mary's, Burma Superstar, Cafe Colucci, Curbside Creamery, Doña Tomas, EZ Taqueria, Red Sea Restaurant, Roses Taproom, Cro Cafe, Barcote, Hawking Bird, Mariposa Bakery, Mountain Mikes, Preserved Goods.

Proceeds benefit Claremont Middle School, Oakland Tech, and Emerson Elementary, Sankofa, and La Clinica de la Raza. Come enjoy fun and delicious good times for a good cause.

Safer Rockridge

from page 8

Also, since community feedback has often indicated a desire for random hours, IGI is providing random patrols interspersed around the clock.

Lastly, for contributors we now offer home-alarm response. After completing a form (see SaferRockridge.org), IGI can be listed as the first point of contact for home-alarm response, saving false alarm fees charged by OPD and potentially providing quicker response in the case of a real issue. Contributors will continue to receive vacation watch and safety escort services during scheduled patrol hours as well.

Funding for the Safer Rockridge patrols depends entirely on the generosity of the community. In a typical month, Safer Rockridge's funding draws from around 300 individual donations (with most at the suggested amount of $30/month) and several commercial sponsors. Safer Rockridge accepts both recurring and one-time donations. For info on how to send checks or to provide feedback, visit Saferrockridge.org, or e-mail saferrockridge@gmail.com.

CCA Diversity Studies Presents Free Programs

California College of the Arts, CCA, invites the community to an exhibition and two weeks of free public programs on its Oakland campus beginning April 9 and running through April 20.

Alongside an exhibition by over 20 of its faculty members, there will be a **lecture by Emory Douglas** (who served from 1967-1980 as the minister of culture for the Black Panthers); **performance by Funk scholar and radio host Rickey Vincent**; poetry tours of the exhibition by **San Francisco poet laureates Kim Shuck and Devorah Major**; and a showcase of musical performances and lectures the night of Friday April 13 featuring **vocalist, songwriter, and producer Jennifer Johns and Oakland-based rapper and activist Vreni Michelini-Castillo** (aka Chhoti Maa).

**Lectures, Live Music,
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Calendar

from page 15

- **AARP FREE Tax Filing: for those with middle-and-low incomes.** Thursdays, through April 12. **Make appointment now.**
- **Hummers Delight:** the lifestyle of the world's smallest birds: Naturalist Leanne Grossman. Thurs, April 26, 10:30am. Free, **but RSVP.**

Seniors age 55+ join for $12 annual dues for discounts and benefits. More info at 597-50

Temescal Farmers' Market
Open Sundays, 9am to 1pm (all year). Locally grown fruits and vegetables; fresh ranch eggs. Sample the goods; meet the growers. Live music. 5300 Claremont Ave. (off Telegraph) at DMV parking lot.

Email Rockridge News Community Calendar items to: joellis1@hotmail.com, phone 653-3210 (after noon), or mail to: Rockridge News Community Calendar, 4123 Broadway, PMB 311, Oakland, 4611. Deadline is the next to the last Tuesday of the month. **Compiled by Jo Ellis**

COMMUNITY CALENDAR

District 1 Councilman Dan Kalb

To arrange times/locations of other office hrs. or more info: mmharris@ oakland.net or www.dankalb.net/contactdan.

Rockridge Branch Library

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- **Toddler Story Time:** Songs, active rhymes and stories (for 9 months to 2 years), Thursdays, 10:30am, upstairs.
- **Pre-School Story Time:** Read-alouds, songs, and rhymes (ages 2 to 5); Thursdays, 10:30am.
- All story times followed by Play Time; parents and caregivers invited.

SPECIAL EVENTS:

- **Saturday Crafternoon:** 4/14, 3:30-4:30pm. Bookmaking and poetry. **Register in advance for Free Workshop to make a 90-Second Newbery Film:** Sat, 4/21, 10am-4pm. Learn to condense a novel into a brief retelling, act it out, and make a film. Ages 8 to 14. Contact Erica at esiskind@ aklandlibrary.org or 597-5017.
- **aws to Read with BARK:** Children ages 5 to 9 read aloud to Natasha, a certified therapy dog who loves listening to stories. Increase reading confidence, skill, and enjoyment. 2nd Wednesday of each month (4/11 and 5/9.) Sign up at the Children's Reference Desk.
- **Poetry Month Activity:** Get supplies at the Children's Desk to make Blackout Poetry or use the Poem Monster. Tuesdays, 4/17 & 4/24 3:30-7:30pm.
- **Kamishibai Stories:** Celebrate Asian & Pacific Islander Heritage Month & Bicycle Month: Saturdays, 5/5, 5/19, 5/26 at 10:30am, and Tuesdays, 5/8 & 5/22 at 6:30pm. Enjoy Kamishibai stories on a Japanese-style paper-theater on the back of a bicycle, while you nibble on Japanese treats. All ages welcome.

FOR TEENS

- **Learn SCRATCH at Ready, Set, Connect!** Tuesdays 4 - 6pm. Drop in and create a program with help from our intern. One-on-one or small groups. No sign-up necessary.
- **Study Room Hours:** Do your homework at the library. A high school tutor is available for homework questions. Tues & Thurs, 4 - 5pm; Wed: 3 - 4:30 pm (during school days).
- **Blackout Poetry Program** to celebrate National Poetry Month. Use a sharpie to black out unwanted words from a book page create a poem. **All supplies provided,** pril 11, 2pm.
- **Smash Tournament:** Calling all levels of Wii U Smash Brawl players. Rockridge Branch tournament on April 18 at 3pm.
- **Free Comic Book Day:** Sat, May 5, all day. Stop by and pick out a special one-day-only comic.
- **Teen Advisory Board (ages 14-18):** Help advise the library how to better serve teens; **get community service credit for school.** 2nd Sat. each month, 1 to 2pm.
- **Teen 'Scape Program:** Play video & board games; make crafts. Every Tues, Thurs, and Fri 3:30 to 5pm; Wed 1:30 to 5pm (during school days).

FOR ADULTS

- **Ready, Set, Connect! One on One computer help.** Tuesdays 4-6 pm and Saturdays 11am to 1pm. Call 597-5017 for appt.
- **eBook Help:** Work one-on-one with a librarian to download eBooks; great collection of digital resources. Fridays, 2 -3:30pm. Make appt. online or call 597-5017.
- **Writers Support/Critique Group:** All welcome. Bring 15 copies of up to 5 pgs. (double-spaced, MS margins) of any prose for on-site reading/discussion, or come empty-handed. 3rd Sat.,1 to 5pm; wheelchair-accessible. Info: 420-8775 or Writefox@aol.com. Call to confirm.
- **Lawyer in the Library:** Free legal info and referral. 1st Tues each month; 6pm-8pm. Sign-up for lottery starting 5pm; lottery at 5:45 pm. Call day of program to confirm.
- **Knitting Meet-Up:** 3rd Saturday, 3pm. Bring your project to inspire or get advice. Beginners: learn to knit and crochet. All levels.
- **Vegetable Gardening Basics:** Sat, 4/7, 11am. Workshop for new and beginning gardeners for successful gardening in Oakland and the Bay Area. Taught by an Alameda County Master Gardener.
- **Book Reading/discussion: Steve Zolno:** *The Future of Democracy: Lessons from the Past and Present to Guide Us on Our Path Forward.*
- **Free Spring Plant Swap:** Share your garden extras and take home new plants for your yard. Saturday, 4/28, 12:30 - 2pm.
- **Improving Your Soil Quality:** Great gardens start with great soil. Learn how to determine your type of soil and how to improve it. Taught by an Alameda County Master Gardener. Sat, 4/28, 2:00 pm.

Art Exhibit, upstairs gallery

APRIL: Judith Mortensen: series of oil paintings featuring clothed figures in landscape.

LIBRARY HOURS

Tues, 12:30 to 8pm.

Wed, Thurs & Sat: 10am to 5:30pm.

Fri, 12 to 5:30pm.

Closed: Sun and Mon.

Book Signing and Conversation with Jacques Pépin

Meet Jacques, get your books signed. Tasting stations offer samples of recipes cooked from Jacques' new books: ***Poulets & Légumes: My Favorite Chicken & Vegetable Recipes*** and ***A Grandfather's Lessons.*** Thurs, Apr. 19, 1:30 to 3:30pm. **Free** and open to the public: Rockridge Market Hall, 5655 College Ave (across from Rockridge BART).

East Bay Booksellers Book/Poetry Readings FREE and open to the public.

Celebrate Independent Bookstore Day with us on Sat, 4/28, from 10am to 9pm.

- Sun, 4/8, 3 pm. **Poetry Flash** with **Lara Gularte** and **Mary Mackey**.
- Wed, 4/11, 6:30pm. **Freud's Bar** (talks by local Bay Area psychoanalysts/ psychologists, aimed at students ages 16-25, while enjoying drinks and snacks). More on this winter's theme of Tickling the Unconscious. Meeting topic is: **"'Why Are We Laughing?!': Jokes, the Freudian Unconscious, and Political Humor;"** presented by **Diana Fuery, LCSW, PhD.**
- Fri, 4/13, 7pm. Celebration of **ZYZZYVA's Spring 2018 Issue.** Readings by contributors **Maddy Rakulinecz, William Brewer, Dawna Kemper,** and **Michael Zaken.** Emceed by Managing Editor **Oscar Villalon.**
- Tues, 4/17, 7pm. **William T. Vollmann:** *No Immediate Danger: Volume One of Carbon Ideologies.*
- Sun, 4/22, 3 pm. **Steve Almond:** *Bad Stories: What the Hell Just Happened to Our Country?*, in conversation with **Matthew Zapruder.**
- Tues, 4/24, 7pm. **Christopher Zeischegg (aka Danny Wylde):** *Body to Job.*
- Wed, 5/2, 7pm. Native American Perspectives, with **Greg Sarris;** *How a Mountain Was Made,* and **Robert McNally:** *The Modoc War.*
- Sun, 5/6, 3pm. **Poetry Flash** with *Lynne Knight* and ***Beth Spencer.***
- Tues, 5/8, 7pm. **Jamel Brinkley:** *A Lucky Man.*

East Bay Booksellers, 5433 College Ave. More info abt. the authors, books and other events: 653-9965 or info@ebbooksellers.com.

Children's Support League's 30th anniversary Heart of the Home Tour

The tour of five beautiful homes in Piedmont and Oakland raises funds to support a variety of non-profit agencies that benefit all disadvantaged children in Alameda and Contra Costa counties. April 27 and 28. Go to childrenssupportleague.org for more info and to purchase tickets.

Square Dance in North Oakland

Music by The Squirrelly String Band. Calling by **Jordan Ruyle.** 1st Fridays, 8 – 10pm. All levels welcome; all dances taught on the spot. Come alone or bring friends. $5-10 sliding scale donation. The Niebyl-Proctor Marxist Library, 6501 Telegraph Ave. Info: squirrellystringband.com.

North Oakland Senior Center

5714 Martin Luther King, Jr. Way, Mon. – Fri., 9am to 4:30pm. **Programs include:** Arts/crafts; health counseling; dancing and exercise; trips, tours and theater outings; Alzheimer's support groups, computer classes & more.

Calendar, page 14

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